

TO: Rep. Amanda Price, Chairperson, House Education Committee

FROM: Bill Perry, Deputy Director, ReadyNation

DATE: June 4, 2015

SUBJECT: SB 103 – Educator Performance Evaluation

It is a challenge for business people today to find workers with the skillset to match jobs. Furthermore, there are twice as many jobs posted today that require at least some college training in contrast to those jobs that only need a high school diploma or less. High school graduates often leave their home districts to compete in technical school, college and universities, and in their careers. However, many are not equipped to compete.

In Michigan, Research by the National Skills Coalition (2014, August) on the skills gap shows that middle skill jobs represent 54 percent of all Michigan jobs, but that only 49 percent of the workers in Michigan have the needed training to perform in these positions. Also, most jobs require higher technological capabilities today.

That's why having our public schools focus on higher standards for English and mathematics and other courses are essential. It is equally essential to ensure that teachers are able to teach to those standards and are given the training to do so. Also, we know that early literacy skills lay the foundation for future success in the K-12 school system and beyond.

Therefore, we believe that teacher evaluation policy should include the following:

- Establishing a clear definition of effective teaching;
- Creating and providing a research based evaluation tool aligned with the definition of effective teaching, curriculum standards, and student growth to evaluate educator performance;
- Requiring that evaluation systems meet specific statewide minimum standards, though individual school districts would be allowed to go beyond the minimum to include even higher standards;
- After two years, include that teacher assessments shall be aligned with a statewide student growth model based on required student assessments aligned with core curriculum; and
- Developing an objective master teacher pathway that sets high standards for master teachers to achieve. This will truly distinguish and credential those teachers to serve as leaders in the field and as mentors for their colleagues.

Education is critical to ensuring that young people can compete and that businesses have a strong pool of potential job candidates. Having a consistent, statewide teacher evaluation system will help to ensure that students have the best chance to succeed in school and beyond.